

FAITH.

GEO. A. RUFF.

At the session of the Christian Endeavor Society the subject for entertainment and instruction was the word, *Faith*. What do we understand by this word faith? A word of one syllable and five letters. It appears most too insignificant to dwell upon. But when we try to comprehend its meaning, we find it is more than we are able to digest. In Latin it means to trust, in Greek, to persuade, to draw toward anything, to conciliate, to believe, to obey. The assent of the mind to the truth which is declared by another, resting on his authority and veracity, without evidence; the judgment that what another states or testifies is the truth. I have strong faith or faith in the testimony, of witness or in what a historian narrates. Faith founded on sacred doctrines or on the testimony of the sacred or inspired writers is called historical or speculative *faith*. Evangelical, justifying or saving faith is the assent of the mind to the truth of divine revelation. *Faith*, on authority of God's testimony accompanied with a cordial assent of the will or approbation of the heart. *Faith* in theology is the assent of the mind or understanding to the truth of what God has revealed, simple belief of the Scriptures, being the perfection of God. Milton says, faithfulness, fidelity, a strict adherence to duty and fulfillment of promise. Her failing, while her *faith* to me remains, I would conceal.

Again in Romans 5, we find that by being justified by *faith* we have peace with God. Sin and death came by Adam, so righteousness and life came by Jesus Christ. Therefore being justified by *faith* we have peace with God through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. By whom also we have access by *faith* into his grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Hope is the great anchor to *faith*. In Hebrew 11, we find the nature of *faith*. Paul says without *faith* we cannot please God. Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Through *faith* we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain. By *faith* Enoch was translated that he should not see death. But without *faith* it is impossible to see Him, for he that cometh to God *must* believe that he is and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him. By *faith* Moses when he was come to years refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's daughter. By *faith* Abraham when he was tried offered up his son

Isaac, and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten Son. By *faith* they passed through the Red Sea, as by dry land, which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned. By *faith* the wall of Jericho fell down after they were compassed about seven days. Time would fail us to tell of Gideon, of Barak, of Samuel, of Jephtha, of David, and of the prophets, who through *faith* subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valient in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens. In II Corinthians 5:7, Paul says, we walk by *faith* and not by sight. Therefore is our faith so strong that we are confident and willing rather to be absent from the body and be present with the Lord. L. Woods says *faith* is a firm, cordial belief, in the veracity of God, in all the declarations of his word. Or a full and affectionate confidence in the certainty of those things which God has declared and because he declared them.

In Romans 10, we find Paul's prayer for Israel who are misled by blind zeal. He says, brethren my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they might be saved. For the righteousness which is of *faith* speaketh on this wise, say not in thine heart who shall ascend to heaven? Or who shall descend into the deep. But what sayeth it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is the word of faith which we preach. Dwight says, the *faith* of the Gospel is that emotion of the mind, which is called trust, as confidence, exercised toward the moral character of God, particularly of the Savior. John the revelator writes to the seven churches of Asia in the second chapter. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer. Behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison that you may be tried, and ye shall see tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death and I will give you a crown of life. I know thy works, and charity, and service, and *faith* and thy patience and thy works; and the last to be more than the first. In trying to define *faith* we find it closely connected with *hope*, obedience, duty, fidelity, allegiance, loyalty, and will. My remarks have been confined to faith only which promises a very bright picture.

But there is a reverse side to this picture by adding the word *less* to *faith*, which would be an important word to dwell upon at some future time. I have only given a few points and made but few references on the word *faith*. It would make a long sermon to note all of them here. Thus will I leave it for brighter and more intelligent minds to digest it.

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CHOSEN OF GOD.

J. M. BOWMAN.

Brethren, beloved by God, I know how God has chosen you; for the glad tidings which I brought you worked upon you, not only in word, but also in power; with the might of the Holy Spirit, and with the full assurance of belief. I Thess. 14.

Connybeare and Howson translation. The earnest servant of Christ is always greatly helped at hearing or knowing of the faithfulness of others who are striving to serve the Son of God. The fellowship of those whose yearnings and longings are the same as those that weigh down our own souls is very refreshing. A man traveling in foreign lands is glad to meet with his own countrymen. "Such are the feelings of a Christian when he falls in with a true believer, and knows him to be a citizen of heaven." This same pleasure stirred Paul to declare boldly to the Jews that Jesus was Christ, when Silas and Timothy reported to him the steadfastness of the Christians at Thess. Acts. 18:5.

His pleasure is doubtless greatly increased by *knowing* their election, or that God has chosen them. The Apostle is thankful for the comfort and strength that their faithfulness gives to him and in his expressing his thankfulness he drops two very interesting teachings. That persons are chosen of God or elected. And the means of knowing that they are chosen of him.

When Paul is sure that these converts are really chosen of God he has great reason to rejoice and be thankful for it means so much to him. They are chosen of God. Not only called, but chosen. He tells of several things that they are called to but now he sees that they are also elected or chosen to surely receive the good things to which they have been called. They belong to the "Few are chosen" and have left the "Many are called." God has called them unto his own kingdom and glory. I Thess. 2:12. They were called unto holiness. 4:7. Not appointed to wrath, but to obtain salvation. 5:9. He sees that all of these things are assured to them for he says, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." 5:24.

This election too means so much because it is eternal. Chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Eph. 1:4. Foreordained unto adoption as sons. Eph. 1:5. It means the sure inheritance of the favors of God through Christ. "They shall never perish." "No one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." John 10:29. They will overcome in the world, because Christ who is in them is greater than he that is in the